

VZCZCXRO1758
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEH DU RUEHKUK RUEHMR RUEHPA RUEHRN RUEHROV RUEHTRO
DE RUEHKH #1241/01 2281408
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 151408Z AUG 08
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1629
INFO RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE
RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE
RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE
RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 KHARTOUM 001241

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR A/S FRAZER, S/E WILLIAMSON, AND AF/SPG
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/15/2018

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [UN](#) [AU](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: SE WILLIAMSON'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR
NAFIE ALI NAFIE

Classified By: CDA Alberto M. Fernandez, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Summary: SE Williamson and Presidential Advisor Nafie Ali Nafie agreed to consider a resumption in bilateral discussions, possibly with a "re-calibrated" focus. Williamson stated several times during the meeting that President Bush's primary concern in Sudan is humanitarian, stating that "humanitarian relief is the foundation of US policy in Sudan, and if we make progress there, other issues can be dealt with." Regarding the ICC, Williamson stated that although the US is against impunity and has taken a leading role supporting international war crimes tribunals, the US is not a member of the ICC and has not yet taken a decision on how it would vote if an article 16 resolution is tabled at the UNSC. Williamson urged that the DPA be used as a starting point for further progress on a peace agreement in Darfur, to which Nafie responded that SLM leader Minni Minawi has unrealistic expectations. Nafie railed against members of the SPLM whose only interest is in regime change in Sudan, and accused the SPLA of training Darfur rebels in Bahr al Ghazal near Wau. He also claimed that the SPLM had harbored JEM fighters, who after their attack on Omdurman in May, had escaped to the South. End summary.

12. (U) White House Special Envoy for Sudan Richard Williamson met with Presidential Advisor Nafie ali Nafie August 14 in Khartoum. SPG Director Shortley, CDA Fernandez, State/L Sanford, and SE Staff Assistants also attended; polchief served as notetaker.

Bilateral Discussions

12. (C) SE Williamson explained that "given the way events unfolded" with regard to Abyei talks during his last visit in June, he was forced to leave, but it had nothing to do with the bilateral discussions. In fact, President Bush had asked about progress in the latter. Williamson suggested that the Sudanese consider whether they would like to re-initiate talks, and if so the US would be receptive. "We can pick up where we left off, or we can re-calibrate" the focus of the discussions, he added. SE Williamson stated that the US would rather have a constructive relationship with Sudan than none at all, and recognized that both sides feel that promises have been broken in the past. Williamson stated several times during the meeting that the US government's primary concern in Sudan is humanitarian relief "which is our primary concern in Darfur." Williamson stated that "humanitarian relief is the foundation of US policy in Sudan, and if we make progress there, other issues can be dealt with." Williamson also pointed out that CPA implementation is also at the top of the US agenda.

13. (C) Nafie responded "we have no illusions about the need for improved relations - no one is saying we will not benefit from dialogue." The only difference is that some in the regime are more skeptical than others about the possibility for real improvement. Nafie pointed out that when SE Williamson suggested during his last visit that he wanted to assist with negotiations on Abyei, Nafie himself had suggested that it would be difficult to make progress on this very complicated issue during a short visit. Nafie said he assumed that Washington had cut off the bilateral talks, but that he didn't know if that was the case. Nafie also acknowledged that public pressure in the US may have played a role in the suspension of talks. "Was it this, or all of this? It was so sudden, we felt hurt about it. It was going so smoothly, better than we expected actually." Nonetheless, Nafie said "we believe you if you say you want to engage, because it's good for all of us, and we have an interest in improved relations." Nafie said the GOS could restart negotiations immediately if desired, but Williamson and Nafie agreed that they would consult over the next few weeks about how and when to restart discussions. The GOS will inform CDA Fernandez in early September on the details of a possible resumption.

ICC

14. (C) Nafie expressed frustration at the US abstention on the UNAMID mandate resolution at the UNSC (which included a reference to UNSC consideration of a deferment of the ICC indictment of President Bashir), a move which Nafie

KHARTOUM 00001241 002 OF 004

characterized as "unfriendly" toward Sudan. The explanation (by USUN Deputy PermRep Wolf) was even worse than the abstention. SE Williamson pointed out that the language on the ICC had been added to the resolution at the last moment, and warned that some countries like to claim they can "deliver" the US, but this was a miscalculation. Moreover, Williamson pointed out that the US is against impunity and played a leading role in establishing tribunals for Yugoslavia, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone. However, Williamson emphasized that the US is not a member of the ICC and therefore has different interests at stake. He noted that other countries are concerned that Ocampo's actions will affect the strength and integrity of the ICC, "however those are not our concerns." Williamson said that "most importantly the US has made no decision" on how it would vote if a resolution on an article 16 deferment of the ICC process against President Bashir is tabled at USUN. He added that the controversy on the vote had more to do with the procedures of "the country that had the pen" than the regime in Khartoum.

15. (C) Nafie expressed hope that the US will be sensitive to the impact of the ICC process on the implementation of the CPA and resolution of the crisis in Darfur. "We hope that your interests in Sudan will influence your decision," said Nafie. He also warned against a strategy of using the ICC to put pressure on Sudan to take certain political actions. "If there is something we can do for peace. we will do it," said Nafie. "We know our red lines. If something is not acceptable, we will not accept it in spite of sticks and carrots." Nafie stated that the ICC is interpreted by the regime as a political instrument of the EU "as a means of re-colonizing us." He pointed out that "your friend President Kagame has a problem and so does Uganda's Museveni (who has praised the ICC) because now they want his generals too." In closing on this point, Nafie encouraged the US to calculate its options carefully with regard to the ICC.

Darfur

16. (C) SE Williamson reported that he had met with Chadian

President Deby and had encouraged him to cease support for JEM and other Darfur rebels. He stated that the US believes that a de-escalation of support to rebels on both sides is critical, and this has been a principal point of his discussions with both sides. Williamson said that the US agrees that the JEM assault on Omdurman in May 2008 was undesirable, but pointed out that the Chadian rebel assault on Ndjamena in February 2008 and their attacks on towns in eastern Chad in June were equally undesirable. Williamson noted that JEM is supported by countries other than Chad and also acknowledged that it appeared that JEM had been resupplied by Chad with vehicles Deby had taken from defeated Chadian rebels that had been supplied by the GOS.

17. (C) Nafie stated that the GOS is taking steps to improve security in Darfur, but pointed out that at this point most of the rebels are turning into "gangs of thieves." In order to bring some willing rebel groups in South Darfur under control, the government has begun assigning them military ranks and integrating them into the armed forces, or demobilizing them. Nafie said that this "DDR effort" will have a positive effect on security in Darfur. Nafie also said the GOS has recruited "Popular Police Forces (PPF)" from within the IDP communities and has trained them to serve as police. He claimed that in Kalma camp in South Darfur the GOS had recruited and trained 200 police. Finally, Nafie said the GOS is cooperating fully with UNAMID so that it can deploy rapidly. Nafie claimed that UNAMID is sending out patrols that are too small to defend themselves, and offered that the SAF could provide security and escort UNAMID patrols if needed. Nafie said that DPA non-signatories such as SLA/Unity were contributing directly to insecurity in Darfur.

18. (C) Williamson suggested that the GOS could use the DPA as a starting point and a foundation for further peace talks on Darfur. Nafie replied that SLM leader Minni Minawi is unrealistic in his expectations for the DPA "and wants the DPA to be like the CPA so he can be governor of Darfur." Nafie claimed that the GOS is ready to reconcile with Minawi since he is the sole signatory, but complained that Minawi doesn't understand how to interact with the government, and has not followed through on his own commitments. He claimed

KHARTOUM 00001241 003 OF 004

that Minawi had agreed to security arrangements toward the end of last year but had failed to implement them. Nafie pointed out that Minawi's own leadership is against him, not just non-Zaghawa such as Mustafa Tirab but also Zaghawa commanders such as Arko Daheib. "I'm not bluffing," said Nafie, "I know this for a fact." He noted that the GOS committee to oversee DPA implementation is headed by Minawi himself and never meets. "He can accomplish much if he wanted to, but he is limited and has illusions about his ability."

(C) CPA and Accusations of SPLA Training Darfur rebels

19. (C) SE Williamson urged that the CPA parties continue to negotiate on the long-term Abyei borders rather than allowing this to be decided by the PCA in the Hague. In response to Williamson's urging that the Sudanese work to implement the CPA, Nafie questioned what is meant by "CPA implementation" and requested that someone "un-code those words for me." Nafie pointed out that "democratic transformation" is code for regime change in many places, and implicitly expressed concern that "CPA implementation" is now being used to mean the same thing. Nafie then launched into a tirade against those in the SPLM "who are not running the show," that have a problem with the NCP, and are now "messaging around with Darfur and complicating life." Singling out SPLM deputy SG for the northern sector Yasir Arman and SPLM SG Pagan Amun, Nafie crowed that these members of the SPLM "don't have the means to achieve their dreams" of overthrowing the NCP so they are "complicating life instead." Nafie complained that Pagan and Yasir are going to the US "tonight" and questioned rhetorically "who is advising them?" Nafie also complained

that although much of the CPA had in fact been implemented, the most serious violations were on the part of the SPLA, which still has not disarmed or redeployed all its troops in the north. Nafie also expressed concern about the SPLA Defense White Paper "which you must have a copy of." Nafie accused the SPLA of training Darfur rebels in Bahr al Ghazal near Wau and suggested that the Embassy follow up directly with NISS director Salah Ghosh for additional details. Finally, Nafie accused the SPLA of harboring JEM fighters who had attacked Omdurman in May, and had managed to slip past the SAF into the South. Nafie claimed the JEM rebels had been holed up in Renk at one point. Nafie concluded this rant by mockingly observing "they have big dreams by Yasir Arman that New Sudan will come through Darfur," but discounted Yasir by adding, "he is not a tough competitor politically" because he has no constituency in the North. Nafie asked that the U.S. "talk sense" to an SPLM which he claimed is the real problem "not CPA implementation, which is happening."

Comment

¶10. (C) With regard to bilateral talks, the clear message from the regime during this visit by the SE is that it is in the regime's interests to continue talking to us even if there is no result, perhaps in hopes that they can persuade the US to support them at the UNSC on an article 16 ICC resolution, or at least secure a US abstention. From our perspective, continued discussions with the Sudanese may deliver additional concessions on UNAMID deployment, an easing of bureaucratic impediments to humanitarian assistance, a more constructive approach to negotiations with the rebels, and maybe even GOS guarantees of land rights and compensation to IDPs. The Sudanese have learned not to expect too much in return, but benefit merely from the visibility of continued discussions and the hope of a marginal improvement in US-Sudan relations.

¶11. (C) Nafie reserved his greatest venom for members of the SPLM such as Yasir Arman because Arman is a northerner (from the same area as President Bashir and reported to be a distant relative of the president,) and is viewed by the NCP as an opportunist turncoat and agitator. The most insidious thing about Nafie is that virtually all of his points are true, including his observations about Minawi's inability to manage his movement, control his forces, and implement agreements with the regime for his own part. However, while Dr. Nafie may be a brilliant tactician, he misses the larger point that the regime must find a way to make peace with Darfur rebels despite their inadequacies, and must take major steps on Darfur and the CPA in order to truly advance the

KHARTOUM 00001241 004 OF 004

US-Sudan relationship.

¶12. (U) SE Williamson did not clear this cable prior to his departure.
FERNANDEZ